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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ORIENTAL FRUIT FLIES FOUND IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY ERADICATION PROGRAM TO COMMENCE AUGUST 20

SAN JOSE, CALIF. – An infestation of Oriental Fruit Fly was discovered on August 18, 2008 in the City of Santa Clara. Three flies were trapped in a residential neighborhood northeast of Lawrence Expressway and Stevens Creek Boulevard. The identification of the insects was confirmed by California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). According to State protocol, the California Secretary of Agriculture will issue an emergency proclamation authorizing the immediate implementation of an eradication program.

The planned eradication program is scheduled to commence on Wednesday, August 20, 2008 and will involve the technique of “male attractant” using ground-based, spot treatment applications of insecticide and a feeding attractant lure. The treatment is applied as small, compact disk-sized spots on inanimate objects such as street trees and utility poles. Because of the lure, the male fruit flies are attracted to these application sites and die from feeding on the mixture. The treatments are applied at heights that are typically inaccessible to the public.

CDFA workers will treat an area of approximately 10 square miles as part of this eradication effort. The treatment area is roughly bounded by El Camino Real on the north, San Tomas Expressway on the east, Englewood Road on the south, and Blaney Avenue on the west.

Oriental Fruit Fly is an exotic insect pest found throughout much of southern Asia. Currently, the distribution of this pest in the United States is restricted to the Hawaiian Islands. Oriental Fruit Fly is a pest of over 230 kinds of fruits and vegetables including citrus, grapes, stone fruits, pome fruits, avocado and tomato.

Infestations of Oriental Fruit Fly likely result from the introduction of contraband fruit. In the past few months, this invasive pest has also been found in the counties of Los Angeles, San Diego and Alameda.

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